

EYES ALONE

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9 DEC 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : National Civil Service League Award

1. On 5 December 1968, the Director of Personnel and I conferred with Mr. Jean Couturier regarding Agency frustration in its nomination of outstanding Agency officers for the Civil Service League Awards. I reminded Jean that in the case of Jack Smith and L. K. White, he had encouraged us to renominate in successive years.

2. After a few preliminary platitudes on the difficulty of selecting ten winners from a hundred or so nominations, Jean finally let his hair down and even provided special advice for CIA if it ever wished to really succeed in a specific nomination rather than take the luck of the draw. In brief, I gleaned the following from our discussion:

a. The screening and selection process involves some 40 people plus the staff of the League. There is no opportunity to privately brief this group.

b. The considerations that go into the selection of each year's winners are so varied and changing that it is impossible for any agency to predetermine that they have a winner or to ascertain why they were unsuccessful.

c. The League wants to create the largest nationwide "splash" possible. This creates a bias toward big names, unusual achievements, geographic dispersion, and sharing the wealth among varied and responsive agencies and departments. For example, the annual award banquet is important to the publicity given to the award, and the number of tables likely to be occupied by the big figures of a winning agency is important to the League.

d. As a general rule, don't renominate an unsuccessful candidate. A second failure affronts the Agency and causes embarrassment to the individual. (The League is considering a nomination certificate so that all nominees have some evidence and can take pride in their nomination.)

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3. If an agency really wants to make every effort to have a winner and especially if it wants to renominate someone, it should:

a. Emphasize specific achievements rather than general excellence.

b. The two-page summary is far more critical than the detailed write-up and should be written with enthusiasm and flair.

c. The Director's transmittal letter should exude enthusiasm and endorsement of his nominee. In the case of CIA, Jean suggested that the Director identify several "bigshots" who could be called upon to endorse and amplify on the virtues of the nominee. Couturier even suggested the attachment of letters of endorsement from influential persons.

d. Finally, Couturier confessed that after all nominations were in, "politicking" was the name of the game. He suggested that the Director gain the positive support of key members of the 29-man Board of the Civil Service League.

4. In brief, if a candidate is not already a prominent exciting figure to the public, try to make him such in the nomination papers. Secondly, either be content with the vagaries of the selection process and recognize the competition for what it is (a publicity program) or bolster your chances with a political campaign.



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Special Assistant to the
Deputy Director for Support
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cc: Director of Personnel

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